



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE **108th** CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

WEDNESDAY APRIL 30, 2003

Senate

Preparing for National Competition on Constitutional Knowledge

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, this May, more than 1,200 students from across the United States will visit Washington, D.C. to compete in the national finals of the We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution program. It is the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

I am proud to announce that a class from Smyrna High School will represent the State of Delaware in this national event. These students, with the leadership of their teacher Marc Deisem, have worked diligently to reach the national finals. Through their experience, they have gained a deep knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and values of our constitutional democracy.

This 3-day national competition is modeled after hearings in the United States Congress. The hearings consist of oral presentations by high school students before a panel of adult judges on constitutional topics. The students' testimony is followed by a period of questioning by the judges who probe their depth of understanding and ability to apply their knowledge.

Administered by the Center for Civic Education, the We the People... program has provided curricular materials at upper elementary, middle and high school levels for more than 26.5 million students nationwide. The program affords students a working knowledge of our Constitution, Bill of Rights, and the principles of democratic government.

It is inspiring to see these young people advocate the principles of our Government. These principles identify us as a people and bind us together as a Nation. It is important for our next generation to understand the values and principles that serve as the foundation in our ongoing effort to preserve and realize the promise of democracy.

These students from Smyrna High School are currently conducting research and preparing for their upcoming participation in the national competition in Washington, DC. I wish these young "constitutional experts" the best of luck at the We the People... national finals. They represent the future of our State and Nation, and they give us cause for great hope as we look to the future.